LCT LEXINGTON CONSERVATORY THEATRE
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518-989-6336 Oakley Hall III, Artistic Director
400 East 78 #8
New York, N.Y. I002I

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Beatrice Straight Cookson
I56 East 62
New York, N.Y.

Dear Beatrice:

We only seem to contact you when we need you. You will either find this insulting or a great relief. Our year runs in a straightforward cycle: summer is total and frenetic action, production-oriented; autumn is collective despair; spring is rebirth and movement toward summer, as ~~in~~ the inevitability of the next season is bornin upon us. This year we are getting started a little earlier than usual, deppite the almost overwhelming indebtedness that seems to be our only corporate asset. We still feel we are doing good work, and that we would like to continue for as long as it stays good. We are in fact, for the first time, looking over a summer ahead, and seriously thinking about the fall of 78 and spring and summer of 79. This bodes better, at least managerially. We have been unable to produde at all in New York City this year, so it is not simply a matter of your having been left off our mailing list again.

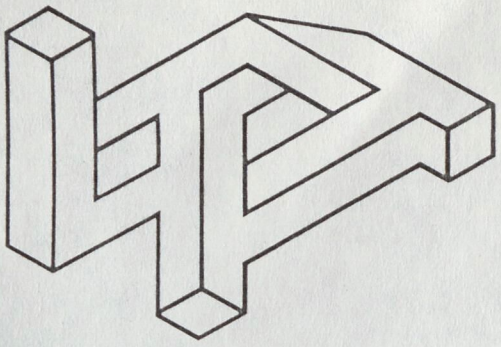
Are you still willing to be of assistance to us? We have been erratic in requesting assistance, and deplorable in thanking you for it, but we are grateful for what you have been able to do for us in the past. We would like to apply to the Whitney Foundation once again. Would we have your support in such an application? May I meet with you in order to discuss our program, and inparticular the new play and play-development work that we are intending? I will take the liberty of telephoning your residence in a few days to see your response to this voice from what you undoubtedly assumed was a dead body, if you gave us any thought at all. If you slam the phone downin my ear, I will certainly understand.

Our I978 summer season represents our usual schizoid spread: we open June I4 with YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU, then STREETCAR, a new play of mine, BEATRICE (CENCI) & THE OLD MAN, Albee's TINY ALICE, another new play which we will announce in our own good time, and close with Marlowe's DOCTOR FAUSTUS. In addition to the above, we are presenting a series of 5 staged readings of new plays.

Enclosed please find a narrative draft of an applicatio n to NEA, describing our program for new plays and playwrights.

I will attempt to be in contact soon. Please forgive the sloppiness of our past contact with you.

Oakley Hall III



LEAGUE OF THEATRE ARTISTS, INC.
Oakley Hall III, Artistic Director
400 East 78th St. #8
NY, NY 10021
(212) 794-8565

DRAFT: NARRATIVE PROPOSAL TO NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

CATEGORY: Small Professional Theatre Companies

Re: Lexington Conservatory Theatre
New Plays, and PROVOS play-development.

Definition: The "Small Professional Theatre Companies" category is designed to offer assistance to smaller groups that concentrate on the creative development of theatre artists and the development and presentation of new works. Among eligible groups are:
-- Theatres with a permanent artistic and managerial structure which concentrate on the presentation of new plays as well as neglected dramatic material of the past.
-- Theatres which operate as a total artistic unit, employing a permanent company, and which are concerned primarily with experimentation and the exploration of original material and new theatre forms.
-- Organizations which specialize in developmental work with new playwrights and directors.
-- Theatres which present works which would otherwise be unavailable to audiences in a particular geographic region or cultural environment.
Other types of theatres may also be considered.

Lexington Conservatory Theatre is a professional resident summer theatre company operating in the Catskills region of upstate New York. In each of the past two years of operation, LCT has presented one new American play as part of its summer program: in 1976 LCT developed and presented an original adaptation of Mary Shelley's FRANKENSTEIN, in addition to an original musical play for young people, PORTABLE ANNABELLE; in the 1977 season, LCT developed and presented THE PREVALENCE OF

The League Of Theatre Artists
Michael C. Van Landingham, Executive Director
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Thomas F. Culp, Executive Producer
Paul W. Bennett, Director of Funding & Planning
. Lexington Conservatory Theatre
. Provos
. Ubique
. Artists Theatre
. Skill Share
. Video Wing
. Sign Drama

MRS. SEAL. In its 1978 season, LCT has scheduled two new American plays for full-scale production. In addition to its Main Season new plays, LCT offers a play-development program known as PROVOS, in which rehearsed, staged readings of new plays are offered. In the past two years, PROVOS has presented 9 new plays in this format. In the summer of 1978 PROVOS will offer a season of 5 new plays, each with playwright in residence and actively working on his or her script, in conjunction with a director and performers. Each play will be rehearsed for 5 days and presented to an audience in the form of a script-in-hand, staged reading. After this first exposure to an audience, and utilizing audience response, the play will be worked for another 3 days and presented to a second audience. The emphasis of the PROVOS workshops will be toward revision through association with and input from director, performers, and audiences.

Thus, in the summer of 1978, Lexington Conservatory Theatre will work with 7 new plays: 2 in full productions for paying audiences as part of its regular Main Season schedule, 5 as part of the PROVOS rehearsed-reading play-development program. Playwright residence for all 7 plays is felt to be of the utmost importance, and it is with playwright-related expenses that LCT is seeking aid from the National Endowment.

In many ways Lexington Conservatory Theatre as a whole fits the definitions of "Small Professional Theatre Companies" as stated above: LCT has a permanent artistic and managerial structure which has remained unchanged for over two years; LCT operates as a total artistic unit, and employs a permanent seasonal company (weather and the shortcomings of the physical plant militate against a longer season); LCT operates in a remote, predominantly rural area, presenting professional and high-quality theatre to a geographic region in which there is no other theatre of any kind (the nearest professional theatres are Woodstock Playhouse, a "true" summerstock company, and Iowa Theatre Lab, a "true" experimental company) both over 45 minutes drive away.) Due to the shortness of its presenting season, LCT operates under an Equity Stock Z contract, but has consistently attempted to offer a serious regional alternative to the Straw Hat syndrome, offering in the past such relatively neglected works as HAIL SCRAWDYKE, QUALITY STREET, THE ENCHANTED, AND 'TIS PITTY SHEE'S A WHORE, in addition to the new plays cited above. We have felt that the best and most interesting course for us was to intelligently mix new and obscure plays with "classics", (in the sense that both CHARLEY'S AUNT and PICNIC are classics). By doing this we have found our audiences more than willing to experiment with us on a new play, and thereby interested them in the new play process, and generated eager and intelligent audiences for the PROVOS workshops and readings.

Viz: our 1978 season -

Opens June 14: Kaufman & Hart - YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU
June 28: Tennessee Williams - A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
July 12: New Play - BEATRICE (CENCI) & THE OLD MAN
July 26: Edward Albee - TINY ALICE
August 9: A New Play to be announced
August 23: Christopher Marlowe - DOCTOR FAUSTUS

Our 1977 season -

George M. Cohan - THE TAVERN
William Inge - PICNIC
John Ford - 'TIS PITTY SHEE'S A WHORE
Otis Bigelow - THE PREVALENCE OF MRS. SEAL (new play)
J.M. Barrie - QUALITY STREET

and our 1976 season -

Thornton Wilder - OUR TOWN
Brandon Thomas - CHARLEY'S AUNT
David Halliwell - HAIL SCRAWDYKE
Friel & Saroyan - One-acts
Jean Giraudoux - THE ENCHANTED
Shelley/Hall - FRANKENSTEIN (new adaptation)

To sum up: Although we feel that the Lexington Conservatory Theatre project qualifies under the guidelines set down for "Small Professional Theatre Companies", we are requesting assistance only with the extraordinary expenses involved in having playwrights in residence for two Main Stage plays, and 5 plays to be handled in the PROVOS play-development program.

Oakley Hall III/Artistic Director